

A CROWN OF LIFE, THE GRATUITOUS RE-  
WARD OF THE FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN:

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A  
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT  
THE OLD JEWRY,  
JULY 10. 1774.

ON OCCASION OF THE

D E A T H

OF THE

REV. THOMAS AMORY, D.D.

WHO DIED JUNE 24,

IN HIS SEVENTY-FOURTH YEAR.

BY R. FLEXMAN, D.D.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

THE ADDRESS AT HIS INTERMENT,

By N. WHITE;

AND

A CATALOGUE OF HIS WRITINGS.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR J. BUCKLAND, IN PATER-NOSTER ROW.

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PRICE ONE SHILLING.

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*W. Muggrave.*

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Published by Dr. FLEXMAN.

TO THE

SOCIETY

OF

PROTESTANT DISSENTERS.

WHO ASSEMBLE FOR

DIVINE WORSHIP

IN THE OLD LEWRY.

THESE DISCOURSES,  
DELIVERED AND PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST,

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THEIR OBEDIENT AND

HUMBLE SERVANTS,  
R. FLEXMAN.

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REVELATION II. 10.

BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH; AND  
I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE.

**I**T is an awful, and to me a very affecting event of divine providence, which hath occasioned my appearance in this place, this day. You lament the late removal by death from this society, of one of its worthy and faithful ministers and pastors. I would assist your endeavours to improve, in the best manner I am able, the instruction which the passage of sacred scripture I have read, offers to your meditation; which, I apprehend, truly describes his religious and moral character, and explicitly announces the glorious recompense, which I firmly believe, he now enjoys.

The promise and possession of eternal life are the gift of GOD by JESUS CHRIST our Lord\*. This is the sublime object of elevated expectation to every sincere christian. That, by the divine bles-

\* Rom. vi. 23.

ing, we may all be qualified to obtain this exalted felicity, our liveliest attention should be engaged, our intense desire excited, and the most active unwearied diligence imployed. Amidst the various scenes and distressing incidents of probationary discipline, it is certainly our important concern, that our hearts be so entirely devoted to GOD, and our conduct regulated with such exemplary circumspection and accuracy, that our recollection of it, in the immediate views of death and eternity, may be serene and animating, and our prospects of divine acceptance and glory, triumphant.

By the command of our blessed LORD, in the text, the absolute necessity of stedfast faith and obedience is declared, and the immense reward of it assured. "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life," is the precept and the promise of JESUS, the author and the rewarder of the faith<sup>b</sup>: which he primarily addressed to the angel of the church of SMYRNA, not exclusively of the other ministers and professors of that society; because it equally delineates the essential character of every christian and minister who assumes that honorable distinction, and is ambitious of attaining the blessedness connected with it. CHRIST speaks to us also by the ministry of his Spirit, and the writings of his apostle. We are encouraged with intire dependence and satisfaction to rely upon the ability, veracity, rectitude and

<sup>b</sup> HEB. xii. 2.



goodness of him, by whose agency, the supreme Father of mercies, the eternal fountain of life and happiness, so generously dispenses all the riches of divine grace, and the inexhaustible treasures of glory. May divine influence enable us so to discern and apply the truth, and feel the energy of the prospect, that we may become the followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises! To this end let us,

FIRST, Examine what are the constituent essential ingredients of the faithfulness required; and,

SECONDLY, Contemplate with raised affection and anticipating hope, that free donation of divine love, which is inseparably connected with integrity and perseverance.

FIRST, we are to examine what are the constituent essential ingredients of the faithfulness required.

This, in the general, must include such an unfeigned, undiverted exercise of all those christian graces and virtues, as will constitute a real meetness for future happiness. Faithfulness apparently refers to the religion of CHRIST; which he, in pursuance of the pleasure and appointment of his Father, came down from heaven to reveal and establish. We are called to testify a just respect to his authority, by a sincere belief of the genuine peculiar principles of his religion—by a public profession of it agreeable to conviction—and by

\* HEB. vi. 13.

an uniform practice correspondent to it's sacred obligations.

In the most extensive construction of christian fidelity, we include an unbiaſſed adherence to the doctrines, duties and ſanctions of natural and reveled religion. In which all our intellectual powers, pureſt affections and moſt aſſiduous zeal ſhould be exerted. Subſervient to a happy preparation for the acceptance of GOD, we ought to give the ſtricteſt attention to all the diſcoverys and requiſitions which the goſpel of the Son of GOD recommends to our notice and obſervance. By their practical influence, our underſtandings will be enlightened, our appetites controlled, and our words and actions properly governed. The ultimate deſign of the grace of GOD which hath appeared, bringing ſalvation to all men, jews and gentiles, is to teach us, that “denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world<sup>d</sup>.” A ſerious ſteddy univerſal reſpect to all divine precepts, is the preſiſe and dignifying characteristic of the faithful diſciples of him, whom GOD hath inveſted with unrivalled authority to preſcribe the immutable conditions of acceptance. Juſtifying and ſaving faith, is exemplified by conſcientious deference and attachment—not to the aſſumed claims, inventions and orders of frail and fallible men, of like paſſions with ourſelves; but to the infallible,

<sup>d</sup> TIT. ii. 12. — ἡ χάρις τοῦ ΘΕΟΥ ἡ σωτηρίας πάντων ἀνθρώπων.



determinations of the most high GOD, as published by our LORD JESUS CHRIST. His undoubted authority over us, and gracious interposition for our salvation, are authentically attested and confirmed by the fullest evidence of facts—uncontrolled miracles really performed by the ministry of CHRIST, and prophecies literally accomplished in him.

Upon this basis our faith and trust in CHRIST may be securely fixed, and the most chearful obedience firmly supported. With conscious integrity and unabated rational ardor, we avow our union with CHRIST, and hope in his guidance and protection—equally averse to the corrupt influence of implicit credulity, the airy dreams of wild enthusiasm, and the fables of debasing superstition. Impressed with habitual awe of the divine majesty, we are forbidden to admit any articles into our creed which are contradictory and absurd—immoveably determined to reject every position which we judge to be repugnant to the essential perfections and moral government of GOD; or hath any tendency to relax the obligations of moral goodness, disclaiming with disgust every sentiment and principle inconsistent with the moral agency of free and accountable beings. And that we may be furnished with an effectual preservative against all indecent sallies of intemperate zeal and dogmatical precipitance, our religious inquiries and decisions should be regulated by the dictates of humility, modest caution

caution and deliberate suspense: thus shall we acquit ourselves as persons who earnestly desire to know, embrace, profess and practise the truth as it is in JESUS.

How instructive and encouraging the declaration of CHRIST to his disciples, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of GOD!"—If we examine the natures of things, with impartial attention, if we yield to the direction of unbiassed integrity, truth alone being our important object, piety, virtue and happiness our governing motives and end, and humbly depending upon GOD's guidance and blessing, fervently pray for the communication thereof; we may then upon the surest ground, hope to avoid every threatening error, and with joyful hearts wait till the destined seasons of initiating and consummate blessedness shall arrive.—In the prospect of these important scenes, a persuasion of the incircling presence and perpetual inspection of our supreme governor and judge will happily conduce to permanent security, invigorated with increasing satisfaction. While we devoutly remember that we must give account to GOD of the principles we adopt, the passions we indulge, the language we utter, and the actions we approve, with what anxious concern shall we endeavour to secure the testimony of an applauding conscience by unremitted circumspection, by a scrupulous exactness and abstemious reserve!

• JOHN vii. 17.

How



How ambitious should we be to attain his gracious approbation to whose unclouded view the most intimate recesses of the heart, in every moment, are perfectly exposed. Deeply affected with the thought, that GOD, from whose eye no disguise can screen, whose power none can resist, whose judgment no difficultys can imbarraß, that HE the supreme judge of all the earth will do right, when HE shall “judge the secrets of men by JESUS CHRIST, according to the gospel.” Equally divested of arbitrary resentment, and partial fondness, he will render to all, not according to specious appearance, fraudulent pretensions or presumptuous confidence, the favorite refuge of artful imposture and delusive hypocrisy, but according to their works—the intrinsic truth of things, and permanency of habitual character, never deviating from the eternal maxims of righteousness, and the spontaneous dispositions of essential benevolence, and unsolicited propitious mercy.

But in order to avail ourselves of the unspeakable advantages connected with divine acceptance, we should give all diligence, that integrity in profession, fidelity in conduct, and consistency of character may be ever maintained.—Thus the firmest resolution, and most fervent zeal, must be maintained and exerted, that we may vanquish the powers of darkness, resist the assaults of temptation, the insnaring influence of

f. Rom. ii. 3, 6—10.

sensual

sensual inclinations, the insinuating seductions and flagitious examples of wicked men: if we are thus prepared and fortified, we shall be able to control the impulse of irregular desires, trample on the insults of pride, suppress the impetuous demands of ambition and avarice, and every suggestion of an evil heart of unbelief, that would prompt us to departure from the living GOD<sup>e</sup>.

By retaining the truth in uprightness, and speaking it in love, our social and personal conduct will be exhibited in an amiable and pleasing light; divine protection will be an impregnable guard to the faithful against the unmerited censures of insidious calumny, and the keenest attacks of wakeful malice. May not upright christians, in whose heart there is no allowed guile, injoy with exquisite satisfaction, the testimony of a placid self-approving mind, quite undisturbed by the petulant and invidious reproaches of those, who falsely accuse their good conversation in CHRIST<sup>e</sup>.

Farther, let it be observed—that by such preliminary influence of preventive wisdom, and prudential maxims, steddily operating, we shall be prepared for the exercises of un murmuring patience and calm submission to the divine pleasure, whatever trials and afflictions providence all-wise and all-righteous may appoint for us. The true christian's passage to glory is often obstructed by the intervention of unexpected diffi-

<sup>e</sup> HEB. iii. 12.

<sup>a</sup> 1 PET. iii. 16.



cultys and alarming disasters. How wisely and graciously hath our blessed Saviour forewarned his disciples of their danger, and instructed them to prepare for incidents of the most depressing emergency. Incessant vigilance, prayer, patience and fortitude are inculcated with particular emphasis, as necessary to shelter them from the storms of adversity and persecution <sup>i</sup>. In the address of the son of GOD to his suffering servants, you see he admonishes them of the necessity of collecting and exerting all the energy of the most spirited resolution, supported by the auxiliary powers of divine grace <sup>k</sup>.

In encountering the dangers incident to the christian warfare, some you know have been called to resist even unto blood, striving against sin <sup>l</sup>: and whenever any of us shall be selected to endure hardness as good soldiers of JESUS CHRIST, our zeal will be happily supplied with additional fervor, by remembering that we are made strong by the grace that is in CHRIST JESUS <sup>m</sup>—that we are inspected by the compassionate eye of an almighty guardian, and that the happy issue of approved fidelity will be the acceptance and applause of the victorious captain of our salvation, who was made perfect through sufferings <sup>n</sup>. Blessed with the consolations of his presence and Spirit, our souls, under the heaviest pressures of affliction, will be sustained and invigorated: and, are not these consolations

<sup>i</sup> LUKE xxi. 12—20, 36.

<sup>k</sup> MARK xiii. 33—37.

<sup>l</sup> HEB. xii. 4.

<sup>m</sup> 2 TIM. ii. 1, 3.

<sup>n</sup> HEB. ii. 10.

assured to the faithful by the stipulations of a divine covenant, as immutable as himself ° ?

Indeed, GOD's immediate interposition for our relief may sometimes be wisely suspended, when it is expedient to exercise our faith and patience by the discipline of anxious solicitude and perplexing doubts and fears : but, it would be disparaging to our characters and hopes, to despair of obtaining complete salvation, because we imagine it is too long delayed.—GOD is faithful, who will not suffer the righteous to be tempted or afflicted, in a degree superior to their strength, and the concurring aids of his grace <sup>p</sup>. He encourageth them to cast all their care upon his omnipotence, and steadfastly rely upon his experienced goodness <sup>q</sup>. And, while they suffer according to his will, to commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator <sup>r</sup>.

But, in a matter of such infinite moment, it is necessary that we extinguish every elevation of unwarranted dependence. The most flattering hopes will be defeated, and the sources of comfort obstructed, with respect to those who neglect to cherish a constant abhorrence of sin, and to practise universal righteousness unto the end of mortal life. We should with jealous vigilance, endeavour to feel the solemn force of that awakening caution, “Be not deceived ; GOD is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap :.”

° HEB. xiii. 20, 21. 1 PET. v. 10.  
<sup>q</sup> 1 PET. v. 7.      <sup>r</sup> 1 PET. iv. 19.

<sup>p</sup> 1 COR. x. 13.

<sup>r</sup> GAL. vi. 7.



Vain will be the most aspiring pretensions to faith, and the loudest boasts of union with CHRIST will be exploded and annihilated, if by apostasy we relinquish the faith of the gospel, or by ungodliness, profaneness and immorality disgrace the sacred character we have assumed. The awful mandate which should engage our constant attention is, "Be thou faithful unto death." The treacherous deserter draweth back unto perdition.—"He only who endureth to the end shall be saved."

Such, my friends, are the decisions of infallible truth; and so equitable are the decrees of divine wisdom, that they will never be rescinded; they can never be reversed.—What overwhelming amazement must terrify the sinner, when every visionary prospect of safety shall disappear, and every presage of horror awaken the justest apprehensions! But how transporting the joyful hope of those to whom the promise in our text is appropriated! To whom ALONE it will be accomplished. Even to them who obey the precept, and comply with the condition connected with the promise. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Let us then,

SECONDLY, Contemplate with raised affection and anticipating hope, the free donations of divine love ascertained to integrity and perseverance.

JESUS, the Saviour and the judge, by his ministering Spirit, hath reveled and proclaimed the

† HEB. x. 38, 39. MATT. x. 22. MARK xiii. 13. REV. ii. 26.

blessing, which his gracious hand will certainly bestow. Should any gloomy doubts of injoying it, be permitted to distress the hearts of those whom conscious integrity, humbly dependent on divine truth, power and faithfulness, so justly encourageth to expect it! All the preliminary dispensations of divine providence and grace have been established to qualify the faithful to injoy, and authorise the immediate dispenser to confer the blessing. He is already in possession of the kingdom which the destined co-heirs with him shall surely inherit<sup>u</sup>; and THE CROWN OF LIFE is the unalienable property of those faithful servants of CHRIST, whom his Father will condescend to honor<sup>w</sup>.

The language which declareth the promise is figurative; but, peculiarly just; and the idea is as animating and sublime, as the phrase is elegant and beautiful. A CROWN is the genuine symbol of royal dignity, suitable to the high rank of those, who are exalted to sit down with CHRIST on his throne<sup>x</sup>, and partake of the ineffable splendor and pleasures, of celestial radiance and felicity. A CROWN of LIFE exhibits an assurance of it's perpetual duration, as well as it's unclouded lustre. — But who can describe or imagine the various sources of felicity which they shall injoy as suitable to their distinguished preheminance of character, the children of GOD, the redeemed of the LORD!

<sup>u</sup> ROM. viii. 17. 2 TIM. ii. 11. 12.  
<sup>x</sup> REV. iii. 21.

<sup>w</sup> JOHN xii. 26.



The enlarged notion of heavenly blessedness which, I apprehend, the gospel justifies me in adopting, includes the whole extent of beatific vision and rapture—commencing in part at the dissolution of animal existence, but perfected by the consummation of bliss, both in body and soul in the regions of everlasting glory.

The commencement of happiness to the faithful I refer to that period when the earthly house, or mortal tabernacle is laid in ruins—when the immortal spirit, not subject to destruction by the assault of death, being absent from the body is present with the LORD<sup>y</sup>. And in this intermediate season of absence from the body is not only capable, but also actually possessed of the sensations and perceptions of conscious existence and divine approbation. Admission into that presence where there is fulness of joy, seems altogether incompatible with a total loss of intellectual sensibility, and an utter incapacity for any enjoyment whatsoever. To be present with CHRIST, through whom we are accepted, by whose gospel and life and Spirit we are qualified to obtain it, and yet to be totally insensible of such qualification, and acceptance, seems to be perfectly inconsistent with every idea, I can form either of justness of sentiment, or propriety of expression. That a christian when absent from the body is blessed with acceptance, is the positive declaration of an inspired apostle: shall the promise of acceptance, then, during that state of separation from the body, be so degraded as to con-

vey the assurance, that a succession of ages will intervene, before any capacities of rational life, will be granted, or any fruition or sensation of rest and peace experienced! Upon the promise of CHRIST may we not joyfully expect, that when we put off this vesture of abasement and mortality, some less incumbering vehicle will be given to the spirits of the just made perfect<sup>z</sup>; should it be at all requisite for social converse and reciprocal communication of sentiment and affection, that any system of material essence or ethereal fabric should be intimately connected with them.

But without recurring to speculation or precarious conjecture, let our judgments be regulated by the evidence of scripture, concerning an intermediate state of vital agency, consciousness and happiness.

Did not Saint Stephen, the first martyr for CHRIST, approve his faithfulness unto death, and at the same time his hope of immediate conveyance, to the presence and acceptance of his LORD! full of the holy Spirit, he finished the scenes of mortal life with fervent prayer to him to receive his departing spirit into his gracious protection. LORD JESUS receive my spirit<sup>a</sup>. It is not improbable, but that he was a spectator of CHRIST's sufferings upon the cross, and now recollected, with what strong affection at that time, he said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit<sup>b</sup>."

<sup>z</sup> HEB. xii. 23.

<sup>a</sup> ACTS vii. 55, 56, 59.

<sup>b</sup> LUKE xxiii. 46.



Saint Paul connects his desire of dismissal from a residence in the flesh, with an immediate and happy presence and union with CHRIST, as what he knew would be unspeakable gain<sup>c</sup>. This separate state of enjoyment and felicity he declares to be more eligible, far better in every respect, than his continuance here, though distinguished by diligence and zeal, by eminent improvements, by useful and acceptable services in the church of GOD, and patient sufferings for the name of CHRIST.

Saint Peter seems to express the like sentiments in the apprehension he had of the real nature of that death, which by revelation from CHRIST he knew he should shortly endure<sup>d</sup>. He describes his decease as a departure from, or a putting off of the tabernacle<sup>e</sup> in which he resided during the season of the present life.

But the most satisfying testimony on this subject is given by our blessed LORD when he offered to his apostles the strongest motives to fortitude and fidelity in his service. From hence we are warranted to conclude that the vital agency, and intellectual vigor, as well as consciousness of the soul, are absolutely uninjured by the dissolution of the animal

<sup>c</sup> PHIL. i. 23.

<sup>d</sup> 2 PET. i. 13, 14, 15.

<sup>e</sup> The very learned Bishop PEARCE, in his notes on LONGINUS, observes that the word ΣΧΗΝΟΣ, properly signifies a body; and refers to several instances of the justness of this construction from antient authors, viz. PLATO, ÆLIAN, HIPPOCRATES, NICANDER and ARETÆUS. LONGINUS NOTIS PEARCE, p. 116, 117. Edit. Amstel. 1733. 8vo.

system. To suggest that the soul is as MORTAL as the body, and as truly killed and destroyed, is evidently incompatible with the doctrine of the gospel, and fixes a disparaging imputation on the wisdom and veracity of our divine and infallible master. His declaration is too explicit to be evaded, and his promise too important to be easily resigned. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul <sup>f</sup>."

Farther, it may be observed—that the idea of some degree of happiness and honor to be enjoyed immediately after the preparatory, prerequisite qualification for it hath been acquired, seems analogous to the custom of crowning the victor with the premial coronet, as soon as his right to that ensign of dignity and applause was proclaimed.—It was the unvaried practice to bestow the usual decoration of honor, as soon as the conditions appointed for that purpose had been fulfilled <sup>g</sup>.

From

<sup>f</sup> Matt. x. 28.

<sup>g</sup> The exercises or contentions used on those occasions, every fifth year, were RUNNING, LEAPING, WRESTLING, &c. which engaged the principal men of GREECE in a competition of honor, and drew a vast concourse of people together.—The combatants prepared themselves for these trials of manhood with great temperance and application. They were obliged to appear at the city of ELIS thirty days at least before the celebration of the games. Here they exercised themselves every day, sometimes a whole day without intermission, with the utmost trial of their patience and fortitude. And, before this, they exercised themselves nine months in the schools of their own town or country.—There was also a JUDGE or president appointed, to whom it belonged to inquire into



From a review of the observations we have made upon the principles and precedents of sacred scripture, do we not clearly discern the evidence of an intermediate state of real perception and conscious joy, into which the righteous are conveyed as soon as they are separated from corporeal distresses and attachments, and introduced into the presence and acceptance of their LORD? There is no foundation to insinuate or suspect, that he delayeth his coming to give them any animating sensations or perceptions of his love.

The sincere and faithful disciple of CHRIST hath an equitable though humble claim to the remembrance of his LORD when he enters into the character of the candidates—whether they were free-men, and GRECIANS; and clear from all infamous and immoral stains:—to inquire into their qualifications according to the order prescribed for those exercises—whether they had entered their names in time, and duly prepared themselves answerable to the dignity of those solemnities. It was also his business, and those who assisted him, to decide any differences, which might arise on those occasions; and finally to declare, who were the persons to be proclaimed victors by the heralds. The reward given by the judge was a CROWN composed of the branches of a wild OLIVE, for the head, and a branch of palm-tree for the hand. Those were public testimonys of the victors worth and merit, and followed by the acclamations of that numerous assembly, and the congratulations of particular friends. Sometimes amidst their friends they returned to their own country in a kind of triumph, enjoyed great privileges and immunitys, and were ever afterwards held in great honor. See, for a full account of these proceedings, the learned dissertation of the excellent GILBERT WEST, Esq; prefixed to his Odes of PINDAR, &c. 4to. 1749.

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his

his kingdom. He hath glorified GOD upon earth, and finished the work which was assigned him<sup>b</sup>. His day of service being ended, his warfare accomplished, and his fidelity approved, what should interpose to obstruct the completion of his wishes and hopes, by separating him from the love of CHRIST, the glorious fruits of which he is so happily qualified to participate in with intense delight? When the heroic christian hath fought a good fight; when by a patient continuance in well doing he hath sought for glory, honor and immortality, approved his active zeal and unremitted attachment to piety and virtue, and finished his appointed course of duty with general applause, will the unbounded munificence of his sovereign and judge withhold from one thus prepared, what his own overflowing goodness and the declarations of his will have encouraged him to expect?

This prospect, I own, is peculiarly adapted to inviven their hearts, whose resolution is fixed, by the help of GOD, to persevere in duty, though they suffer death for righteousness sake; a crisis of that eminent importance, that the promise of a CROWN OF LIFE seems primarily designed, and with most expressive energy, to countenance and support such a determined resolution.

But is there not, likewise, by this reflexion, sufficient encouragement given to sustain a christian's resignation and hope, when he feels, or appre-

<sup>b</sup> JOHN xvii. 4.



hends himself near the verge of mortal life, and almost ready to sink in the struggles of exhausted and expiring nature! At least, there is a promising source of consolation opened for the advantage of those surviving friends who were afflicted spectators of the concluding scene and last moments of the dead, who "die in the LORD." Who believe that such persons die, not only that they may actually rest from their labors, but also that their good works, in all their genuine effects and intrinsic<sup>1</sup> acknowledged excellence, may accompany them into their prepared mansions of their father's house; where the perfection of blessedness exactly corresponds to the established perfection in holiness and worth of every individual<sup>2</sup>.

You will indulge me for some few moments, to expatiate on some of the striking objects which often distinguish that dejecting season. When all the projected means of relief are ineffectual, and united fervent wishes and prayers unavailing—every blossom of hope totally blasted, and entirely dissipated every imaginary symptom of fond and fallacious expectation.

It is not improbable, that some tender afflicted spirits may be in this audience, who have been exercised, perhaps recently, with the distress of such a visitation.—All who have a just relish of the pleasures of affectionate faithful friendship, cannot be unapprized what pungent sensations of

<sup>1</sup> REV. xiv. 13. Τα δε εργα αυτων ακολουθει MET' AT-  
ΤΩΝ.

<sup>2</sup> JOHN xiv. 2.

grief may be felt on such occasions. — With a profusion of tears, and hearts sympathizing with pathetic accents of sorrow, they behold the convulsions and distortions of the dissolving structure of mortality. The trembling hand feebly raised, heavily falling! The organs of sight, once so lively and piercing, now almost closed with perpetual darkness. The contracted face bedewed with cold sweats, and the circulating fluids almost stagnated! the quivering lip, the faltering tongue, and parting groan, all indicate the awful crisis, the FINAL EXIT. The immortal spirit released from it's prison, returns to it's Creator, Savior and GOD<sup>1</sup>.

But, remember, christians, that in all the sad variety of grief, the gospel of the grace of GOD, richly supplies the afflicted mourners with comfort and hope, while they behold, or realise in imagination, the objects productive of their complaints. As to them who sleep in JESUS, the persuasion of their being immediately happy in the presence of GOD and CHRIST, may encourage us to discard every distressing emotion, every perplexing thought. From the communications of divine benignity, pleasures must flow more abundant and exquisite than language can express, or imagination describe, or heart desire! Unspeakable and unbounded are the raptures of beatific vision! Where the perfection of holiness hath been established by the sanctifying influence of the pro-

<sup>1</sup> ECCLES. xii. 7.



mises, co-operating with the effectual restraints of the fear of GOD<sup>m</sup>! Thus overflowing as well as unmingled are the joys of those, who have their fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life<sup>n</sup>.

But, however exalted the satisfactions of the righteous which commence at death, the greatest perfection of their felicity and glory, or the complete possession of their incorruptible inheritance, the summit of their hopes, will be in reserve, and prospect, till the appearance of the glory of the great GOD and of JESUS CHRIST our Savior<sup>o</sup>. When the righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father<sup>p</sup>.

To attempt to delineate with exact description in this state of infirmity, distance and darkness, the precise nature and essential qualitys of this consummate state of happiness, would be vain and criminal presumption. — Additional scenes and signals of magnificence will be raised, new and copious springs of transporting delight will be derived from the universal refinement of the revived system, over which death had so long stretched and fixed its triumphant dominion.

In the body of humiliation, were contained during the time of trial, the numerous seeds of disease, and the latent destructive principles of mortality; but in the morning of the resurrection, this corruptible will put on incorruption, and this mortal will be invested with immortality<sup>q</sup>:—obe-

<sup>p</sup> 2 COR. vii. 1.

<sup>n</sup> ROM. vi. 22.

<sup>o</sup> TIT. ii. 13.

<sup>p</sup> MATTH. xiii. 43.

<sup>q</sup> 1 COR. xv. 42—46.

dient to the command of that sovereign voice, and the all-invigorating energy of that resistless power, by which all things will be subdued and new modelled, a spiritual, powerful, glorious, and eternal fabric will be erected, — a body fashioned like unto the glorious body of CHRIST<sup>s</sup>.

For in a real but limited resemblance of CHRIST, the most sublime qualities of inimitable beauty, celestial radiance and indefectible vigor, will be inseparably united.

What ineffable pleasure must flow from being for ever WITH the Lord<sup>s</sup>!—In his presence there is fullness of joy! The effulgent glories of his throne, and the displays of his perfections perpetually diffusing their lustre, and yet perpetually augmenting. Where nothing can exist that can disqualify for enjoying uninterrupted blessedness, or obstruct the most delightful views or reflexions. — Where every object, perception, relish, fruition, and prospect will concur to constitute an inconceivable sublimity of bliss in the first moment of fruition. — And yet it must be allowed, that the happiness will be progressive, expanding and multiplying in all the duration of everlasting existence. After millions of ages, as, according to the calculations of present infirmity, mortals inaccurately speak,—after, I say, millions of ages, and ten thousand times ten thousand ages of unraptured contemplation, and praise, the felicity will be as distant from a conclusion, as at the first raptures of transporting delight,

<sup>s</sup> PHIL. iii. 20, 21.

<sup>s</sup> 1 THESS. iv. 16.



O divine love, how unmeasurable the amplitude of thy dominion ! how vast the profusion of thy gifts and blessings ! O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of GOD ! What immense treasures hath the grace of GOD prepared in heaven for the faithful ! That all-bountiful, paternal hand will hereafter dispense every good and perfect gift which divine truth hath irrevocably promised.

So attentively let us fix our meditation on those blessings, so ardently aspire to the possession of those treasures, that, with unremitting zeal, we may press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of GOD in CHRIST JESUS our LORD.

We now proceed, in the

Last place, to apply the observations we have already advanced and illustrated.

I. From what hath been said, we may clearly discern the peculiar excellency and advantages of the gospel of the grace of GOD. It is a dispensation of benevolence, wisdom, rectitude, and happiness. The primary source, the efficient cause, and all the instrumental and subservient means and methods of salvation ;—all things relating to the contrivance and accomplishment of this scheme of reconciliation, in which are contained all the unfathomable riches of grace, as well as treasures of wisdom and knowledge, are of GOD.

In pursuance of the pleasure and appointment of the Father of mercies, and GOD of all grace,

<sup>t</sup> PHIL. iii. 14.    <sup>u</sup> 2 COR. v. 18, 20. EPHES. i. 17.

the eternal Son descended from the mansions of light, divested for a season of the glory which he had in the presence of the Father, before the world was \*. He was made a little lower than the angels, and for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of GOD should taste death for every man \*. He was made perfect through sufferings—perfectly qualified for all the important functions of that sublime dignity and universal dominion, to which GOD hath raised him, in consequence of his obedience to death, resurrection and ascension into heaven. For being thus perfected, he is become the author of eternal salvation to all them who obey him †.

It

\* JOHN xvii. 5.

x HEB. ii. 9, 10.

† HEB. v. 9.

\* The resurrection of Christ, is the great and solid foundation of our hope and faith in him, even of our faith in his blood.—Since our faith in his death, our hope in his blood, by which hope and faith we are justified, are built upon the truth and credit of his resurrection, it is very properly said, that “ he rose again for our justification:” for the DEATH of CHRIST, would have been NO JUSTIFICATION to us, nor could we have had HOPE or FAITH in it, but for the power and glory of the resurrection, which has wiped away the scandal and ignominy of the cross, and made it a rational act of faith, to hope for life and immortality FROM HIM, who himself once died upon the tree. For the truth of this exposition I appeal to St. PAUL, who hath told us, that “ if Christ be not risen, our faith is vain, we are YET IN OUR SINS.” So that faith in the death of CHRIST, not grounded on the assurance of his resurrection, is a VAIN FAITH; and such an one as CANNOT deliver us from our sins. Nay, that the death of

CHRIST



It is one principal object of the dispensation by CHRIST, to exhibit the promise, and confer the possession of eternal life.—The publication and final conveyance of those blessings, having been committed to him, by GOD who had given him power over all flesh, that all which GOD had given to him, may be subservient and effectual to give to them, who believe, and obey the gospel, eternal life. By raising him from the dead, and giving him glory, adequate to his exalted character\*, our faith and hope terminate in GOD, as the supreme governor, the judge of all, and the everlasting portion. Eternal life denotes the enjoyment of perpetual felicity in the presence and favour of GOD. Of this none can give the

CHRIST could not have been a propitiation for sin, without his resurrection, he expressly teaches in the next verse, saying, that “if CHRIST be not raised, then they also which are fallen asleep in CHRIST, are PERISHED\*.” Bishop SHERLOCK’S Discourses, Vol. I. pages 213, 214. 1754. See also pages 224, 225.

\* 1 PET. i. 21. JOHN xvii. 2. Καὶ ὁ δίδωκεν αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν παντός σαρκος, ἵνα ΠΑΝ Ο δέδωκεν αὐτῷ δώῃ αὐταῖς ΖΩΗΝ Αἰώνιον. A passage, which in our version, seems to be misunderstood as to it’s genuine sense, as well as grammatical construction. The obvious meaning seemeth to be this:—that the principal end and design of CHRIST’S being invested with power to raise the dead; was, that he might be qualified to dispense that most sublime donation of the Father’s unmerited grace, eternal life, to all who obey him.

\* 1 Cor. xv. 14, 17, 18.

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promise,

promise, and secure the possession, but by authority derived from him, who hath life in himself by absolute necessity, by independent and immutable perfection of nature. In every moment of duration, all beings whether derived from GOD, immediately, or by delegated efficiency, are absolutely and necessarily dependent upon his influence and pleasure. — The goodness of GOD therefore is equally manifested in the distribution of his blessings, whether they are immediately conferred upon CHRIST, as the donation of free and unmerited grace; or by his ministerial agency, who is appointed to be the mediator, to convey them to us, in present promise or final possession.

By raising CHRIST from the dead, GOD hath demonstrated his full approbation of what he did in

PHIL. ii. 9. iii. 21.

Whatever promises of the favor of GOD in the invisible world, have been vouchsafed under the prior dispensations, it is certain that the clearest and fullest manifestation of their intrinsic excellency and unlimited duration, were reserved to dignify the personal appearance, ministry, and resurrection of CHRIST; who, by the gospel, hath predicted and promised the abolition of death, and given additional lustre to the intermediate state of conscious existence, as well as explicit assurance, that the resurrection will introduce an incorruptible and immortal life. 2 TIM. i. 10. Φανερωθεῖσθαι δὲ νυν διὰ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ἡμῶν ἸΗΣΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ, καταργήσαντος μὲν τὸν θάνατον, φωτίζαντος δὲ ζῶν καὶ ἀφθάρσιον ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΥ.

executing



executing the functions of his ministry, and in sealing and ratifying the truth with his blood. Upon this account GOD highly exalted him, and with gratuitous munificence gave him a name which is above every name, — authority, or dominion superior to all others; that in the name, that is, in submission to the authority of Jesus, every knee should bow; every rational inhabitant in heaven, and earth, and the invisible state, should be absolutely subject to him; and every tongue confess, that the LORD JESUS IS THE CHRIST, to the glory of GOD THE FATHER<sup>b</sup>.

Blessed be the GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that faderh not away, reserved in heaven for those, who are kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation<sup>c</sup>. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the world to save sinners<sup>d</sup>. Him hath GOD sent to bless us, in turning away every one of us from our iniquitys<sup>e</sup>. By the precepts of his gospel, and the attractions of his example un-

<sup>b</sup> — ΕΧΑΡΙΣΑΤΟ αὐτῷ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΤΟ ὑΠΕΡ ΠΑΝ ΟΝΟΜΑ<sup>α</sup> ἵνα  
 ΕΝ τῷ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΙΗΣΟΥ ΠΑΝ γΟΝΥ ΚΑΜΨῃ ἑπουρανίων, καὶ  
 ἐπιγείων καὶ κατὰ χθονίων· καὶ ΠΑΣΑ γΛΩΣΣΑ ΕΞΟΜΟΛΟΓΗΣΗ-  
 ΤΑΙ ὅΤΙ ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, εἰς ΔΟΞΑΝ ΘΕΟΥ  
 ΠΑΤΡΟΣ.

<sup>c</sup> 1 PET. i. 3—5.

<sup>d</sup> 1 TIM. i. 15.

<sup>e</sup> ACTS iii. 26.

fulled and all-accomplished, he hath shewn us the path that will certainly lead to life and glory, viz. the practice of uniform piety and universal righteousness.—In this path let us daily and stedily walk, and we may rest assured that it will terminate in everlasting felicity. But disappointed will be every hope of entering into life, if we act in conformity to the corrupt maxims, and pernicious practices of the profane and profligate, who are habitually disaffected to God, and despisers of his ways.

2. We may infer that most groundless, and unreasonable are the censures which unbelievers have thrown upon the religion of CHRIST, on account of its promised rewards, as if it countenanced an abject, mercenary and sordid disposition. To be induced to strict and persevering virtue by the hope of a crown of life, as it is not inconsistent with the genius of christianity, so it is not in the least repugnant or disparaging to the genuine purity and intrinsic excellence of moral goodness. Our blessed LORD was animated by “the joy which was set before him, to endure the cross and despise the shame:” and should any who glory in the name of being his followers, be disposed to question the sincerity of their hearts in religion, because they feel themselves excited to faithfulness and zeal in their duty, by having respect to the recompense of reward? Can they entertain the least suspicion of danger, or appre-

HEB. xii. 2.

hension



hension of just reproach, because they are influenced by these motives, in which we have the captain of our salvation for our example?

If rewards were annexed to actions unworthy of reward; and especially to actions which deserve blame, it would discover a mean and contemptible spirit to desire or accept of them. But as it is the glory of every government to reward real worth, and the perfection of the divine government consists in this, that worth only is there rewarded, and rewarded in exact proportion to intrinsic excellence, it cannot be unworthy of any person to take encouragement from those motives, which the judge of all the earth hath proposed. Let not our attention then to invisible objects and everlasting glory, hereafter to be revealed, be at any time withdrawn from that blessed enlivening hope. Let us rather be excited to greater diligence in the master's service, ambitious of receiving the animating plaudit of so munificent a patron and benefactor,—“well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy LORD.” Every one who really believes a future existence, cannot but wish to render it most eminently blessed; especially as so much of the future reward will arise from conscious integrity, and habitual piety; and that GLORY is only the perfecting of GRACE.

3. With what stupidity and perverseness are all impenitent sinners justly chargeable, who prefer the transitory and precarious possession of earthly scenes of vanity and disappointment, to the pro-

mise of heavenly and eternal blessings! Infidelity and vice cannot presume to look beyond the grave. Their portion is ONLY in this life; and all the advantages which they can gain—all that ambition can grasp, all that avarice, injustice, oppression, or lawless power can seize, or brutal gratification enjoy, are but for a season. Of these, by various disasters, they may be, and frequently are deprived.—Of these, death will certainly and eternally dispossess them. And in the regions of sorrow and despair, how pungent and tormenting will be their sensations and reflexions! In the previous distresses of a sick and dying bed, how destitute will they find themselves of all the sources of consolation! how depressed and dejected with the apprehensions of misery, alarmed by the guilty presages of an upbraiding conscience;—terrified by a just sense of neglected duty, and wilful transgression, through a perverse abuse of divine mercy, and presumptuous defiance of divine resentment. Who can imagine the darkening gloom of that situation, when life is reviewed with unavailing remorse! How piercing every recollection of what is past!—every prospect before them alarming! A wide impassable gulph of ruin and woe, into which they must be speedily plunged,—and the augmented horrors of that day, when the decisive sentence of GOD the righteous judge of all, shall unalterably determine their portion! How terrifying to expect! how inexpressibly dreadful to feel! how impossible then to escape!



4. How different the situation, how peculiarly blissful the condition, of those who have been faithful unto death, and enjoy the promise of a crown of life. They have the blessings of present peace in possession. Exalted are the honours, and most delightful the pleasures, which they have in reversion and prospect. How desirable the portion of those who have kept the commandments of GOD and the faith of JESUS! How excellent, Christians, the blessings you have chosen! and how dignifying the wisdom of the choice you have made! While holiness is the object of your undiverted pursuit, and probity governs, joyful hope assures that everlasting glory will be your happy end!

5. Let us reflect what supporting consolation may be derived from the promises of the gospel, to mitigate the affliction we feel, when we are called by any mournful stroke of Providence, to lament the departure of those who die in the Lord. When our pious friends and benefactors are removed from us by death, they enter into the possession of that happiness, for which their love to GOD, their faith in CHRIST, their firm attachment to religion and its interests, and their perseverance in holiness, have prepared them.

The affliction we may indure in such a conjuncture, the promises of the gospel will be found sufficient to alleviate, when we remember the testimony they have given, and the recompense they have received. We congratulate them on their triumphs over difficulties and temptations, the infinite advantages

vantages they have gained, and the celestial inheritance of which they can never be disseized. You who were intimately acquainted with the talents, labors, and conversation of that eminent christian, that faithful and exemplary minister of CHRIST, whose passage from the afflictions, trials, and duties of life, hath occasioned the present solemnity, will concur with me in drawing such conclusions.

Doctor AMORY was distinguished by such uncommon abilities, and always maintained so unexcusable and so amiable a character, in every social connexion and relation, that I judge myself unequal to the attempt of doing justice to his acknowledged merit.

Your worthy surviving pastor, in the address at his interment, with judicious precision, generous affection and cordial esteem, truly described him as a shining ornament of piety and goodness, and deserving of great and just applause.

The narrative I wish to give of him, who was endeared to us by so many eminent accomplishments,—a narrative undebased by flattering adulation and partial fondness, will express the real effusions of a grateful heart in the language of truth. From a long acquaintance with him, and the intimacies of friendship for more than forty years, never once interrupted by distaste, nor darkened with a frown, I had such full conviction of his benevolent dispositions, and active goodness, that



I honored him as a father, and loved him as a brother.

He was descended from reputable and worthy parents, whom I knew to be eminent for serious godliness, and upright conversation. TAUNTON in the County of SOMERSET was the place of his nativity and education. Where he was placed under the inspection and tuition of several ministers, well qualified, by a large furniture of knowledge and learning, to direct his studys for the best improvements in science; and forming his mind for a suitable progress in piety and virtue.

His academical preparation was principally conducted with a view to his ingaging in the sacred ministry; though no part of useful learning was neglected, that might be requisite to embellish and complete the scholar, and raise to distinction in any other learned profession. Signal were the advantages which he derived from the improving conversation, judicious advice and instructive example of his near relation, the polite, the pious, and accomplished Mr. HENRY GROVE<sup>f</sup>. Possessed he

<sup>f</sup> Dr. AMORY, having given a very instructive narrative of the life, writings, and character of Mr. GROVE, who was his uncle, concludes his attempt to do some justice to the memory of one of the greatest and best men he had known, with the grateful declaration, that to his instructions and example he had been so much obliged, that he esteemed his relation and intimacy with him, among the chief blessings of his life.

Among other advantages which he derived from this connexion and intercourse, was an uncommon capacity for the exercises

he was of uncommon intellectual powers, and by assiduous diligence, daily improving them, his capacity for usefulness as a tutor, was conspicuous, and soon attracted a general esteem from those who best knew him.

In that important station, for several years, by the acquisition of a considerable fund of knowledge, he acquitted himself with reputation and success, at the same time, constantly employed, as a preacher of the gospel of CHRIST.

In the exercise of the ministerial function he was engaged more than fifty years. That sphere

of devotion, so apparent in his public ministrations and family prayers : what he asserts concerning his tutor being so justly applicable to himself. “ The rational and firm persuasion, he had of the being and providence of GOD, and his great and amiable apprehensions of the divine perfections, made devotion to be the chief pleasure and support of his life. In his retirement strongly apprehending the presence and providence of GOD, all-wise and all-good, who directed every event for the best here to the pious and upright, and would infinitely reward them hereafter, he lost every care in the full persuasion that his happiness was the care of GOD. In adoration, gratitude, resignation, and devotedness to the greatest and best of beings, he enjoyed satisfactions, which gave his soul a noble elevation, and the foretastes of heaven ; and having bright hopes of divine approbation, and of a happy immortality, fame, wealth, and sensual pleasures in this life appeared to him as nothing ; and THIS the only important concern of life, TO BE, AND TO DO GOOD in the greatest degrees, and make sure the largest title to the rewards of eternity ; treading in the steps of his great master, “ crucified to the world ” by his death, and raised to “ the lively hope of the incorruptible inheritance ” by his resurrection. Preface to Mr. GROVE’S Sermons, Vol. I. p. 40.

of



of duty was to him a scene and source of the highest pleasure, as it was the result of his free and early choice; his most solicitous concern and ambition were to be found diligent and faithful in the work of the LORD. Impartial in his searches after truth, at the feet of his divine master, maintaining an inviolable regard to the sacred oracles as containing a perfect rule of faith, worship and practice, strongly attached to the interest of religious liberty, the rights of conscience, and the dispositions of unconfined benevolence and charity, he was zealous in dispensing the word of life, and training up precious and immortal souls for eternal happiness.

His abilities as a solid and judicious preacher are apparent in the sermons and discourses he published, upon some of the most interesting subjects of practical religion; and particularly such as were calculated to impart just and honorable apprehensions of the perfections, authority, providence and grace of GOD, and our redemption by CHRIST;—to enforce the obligations and advantages of rational, habitual, fervent devotion to all, as well as the peculiar beautys and benefits of early dedication to GOD, to the rising generation.

After many years of duty in the pastoral character, in the country, he was invited to assist your late much-esteemed pastor, in this church of GOD, where he finished his course. You will not think it necessary, to mention particularly, with what

faithfulness, meekness, candour, modesty, and circumspection, he behaved in the relation he sustained among you. He taught what he believed, and felt, and practised; and tasted with grateful relish the refined pleasure of doing good. If his reception or success were not equal to his wishes, it was not owing to negligence, inattention or imprudence—his benevolence, and caution, and humility were conspicuous, and his morals unspotted.

He did not survive his capacity for service, but his talents, great as they were, continued to his last appearance among you; and after a short confinement by sickness, he attained the blessing of a gracious and calm dismissal, and a joyful entrance into the presence and joy of his LORD.

You, my brethren, among whom he labored, and you also, who were so lately the desire of his eyes, and the delight of his heart,—you to whom he was connected by the most endearing relation, and tenderest affection, will permit me to address you upon the present occasion. You cannot hesitate to own, that providence vouchsafed to give very promising advantages from well-digested instructions exemplified by unblemished deportment.

How evident your duty who attended on his ministry, to recollect and improve his earnest endeavors to spread the saving knowledge of CHRIST crucified and glorified, and to engage you to a stated and profitable attendance on all divine institutions,



stitutions, and the practice of holiness, under the awakening views of his coming to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe<sup>s</sup>.

If you have been favored with any important talents by his ministry and example, let it be your solicitous concern to excel in holiness and virtue, in a manner proportionate to their excellency.— Do you wish that he may give his account for you with joy and not with grief, be resolved to profess and practise religion as the gospel prescribes, and follow him as he was a follower of CHRIST, and you will meet all your faithful instructors with unutterable rapture; “for what, beloved christians, is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? are not even ye in the presence of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, at his coming? for ye are our glory and joy<sup>h</sup>.”

To you, my young friends, to whom your heavenly father condescended to grant the honor and benefit of intimate connexion, by descent or alliance, you are instructed how to improve, a loss, which is to him, the source of everlasting gain. The directions of divine wisdom, it is your duty to implore, that you may greatly profit by the instructions, admonitions and intreatys, by which he so earnestly desired,<sup>8</sup> and incessantly labored, to fix your attention on the best objects; to qualify you by the exercise of piety and virtue, to be useful in this world and happy in that

<sup>s</sup> 2 THESS. i. 10.

<sup>h</sup> 1 THESS. ii. 19, 20.

which

which is to come. Your advantages for being good and happy were eminent; your obligations to rise to higher attainments undoubted, and your endeavors should be answerable.—GOD and the church of GOD, will in reason and equity expect from you more than others, in lower stations, and with less advantages. Retain and cultivate every good principle you have imbibed, fulfil every good purpose you have been exhorted to form; and though you should have the countenance and concurrence only of few companions in the path of rigid virtue and serious piety, resolve to be religious; persist and persevere therein, animated with the promise of divine guidance, and of the blessings derived from divine acceptance. Let the hopes of happiness, and the dread of misery, contribute to your preservation and safety. Know the GOD of your father, and serve him with a perfect heart and a willing mind; —if you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever<sup>l</sup>.

Finally, my brethren, let me exhort, intreat, and charge you to run the race of appointed duty, with patience and zeal; and maintain the glorious warfare with fortitude and honor. “By patient continuance in well doing, you are to seek for glory, honor and immortality, and you have the promise of a crown of life<sup>k</sup>.” When some few years more are past, perhaps, with respect to some of

<sup>l</sup> 1 CHRON. xxviii. 9.

<sup>k</sup> ROM. ii. 7.

you,



you, after a much shorter period, your labours will be finished, temptations will disappear, and your happiness will be secure beyond all possibility of losing it. Take heed, watch, and pray, for ye know not when the time is<sup>1</sup>. Look to yourselves that you lose not the good things you may have wrought<sup>m</sup>; let no man take your crown<sup>n</sup>.—Always remember that your security from danger, and your final possession of blessedness, do ultimately depend upon the blessing and favor of GOD through CHRIST. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall<sup>o</sup>;—and with daily fervent supplication, and unmoved dependence of hope, commend yourselves to his all-protecting patronage and blessing, who is able to keep you from falling, and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy<sup>p</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> MARK xiii. 33.  
<sup>o</sup> I COR. x. 12.

<sup>m</sup> 2 JOHN 8.  
<sup>p</sup> Jude 24.

<sup>n</sup> REV. iii. 11.

## A H Y M N.

### I.

**I**N realms of everlasting light,  
The Saints triumphant reign;  
A crown of life rewards their toil,  
And bliss succeeds their pain.

### II.

While travelling through this thorny vale,  
With sorrows compass'd round,  
What painful conflicts they indur'd,  
What sore distress they found!

### III.

But dang'rous scenes could ne'er affright,  
Nor pleasures tempt astray;  
Resolv'd and cheerful they walk'd on  
In their appointed way.

### IV.

Patient and faithful they maintain'd  
A long laborious strife,  
Till **DEATH** releas'd their struggling souls  
To joys of endless life.

R. F.

THE



**THE**  
**A D D R E S S**  
**AT THE**  
**I N T E R M E N T.**

**My Friends and Fellow-Christians,**

**T**O that silent mansion we have now committed, all that was mortal of a wise, learned, and good man, a sincere Christian, and a faithful Minister, an ornament to his profession and a blessing to the world.

The habitation appointed for the immortal Spirit during its probation here, having been sustained by well-governed appetites, moderate passions, a calm temper, and an indulgent providence, beyond the date commonly assigned to man, at length began to feel its frailty; and being attacked with a disorder powerful enough to have borne down the vigor of youth, or the firmness of meridian life, it is not to be wondered that the earthly house of his tabernacle, in the  
G space

space of but a few days, tottered, sunk, and fell to ruins.

Had this event taken place at an earlier period, it had been in its nature more alarming, and more fatal in its consequences: yet surely there is no time when a wise and good man, an exemplary Parent, Husband and Pastor, who has not outlived his faculties, his usefulness and his enjoyments, can be taken from his Family, Friends and People, without inflicting many deep and painful wounds, rending assunder many intimate, and tender ties, formed by an affectionate intercourse of years, and confirmed by the maturity of experience wisdom and virtue.

To our departed Friend death was welcome: a well-spent life, a serious spirit, habitual devotion, and a firm belief of the Gospel, had long since prepared him, to contemplate it with calmness, and look beyond it with delight. On the morning of that day in which his illness commenced, and his summons came, he was found conversing with his Family on the subject of *Immortality*, the most favorite theme that ever employed his private thoughts, or entered into his public discourses; and he then observed that he should soon follow (how soon, alas! he did not then know) a most beloved and desirable daughter, whom several of us not long since attended to this very receptacle of the dead; and he dwelt on the pleasing surprize with which he should meet her, and behold her unspeakably improved.



To a mind thus disposed death could not come unexpected: to his Family and Friends, it was sudden, surprising, and deeply afflictive. For themselves survivors may grieve, it is natural, it is unavoidable: but none that knew him can sorrow a moment on his account. It pleased God to favour him with a short illness, and an easy dismissal, and then what is there in death which can injure a good man? On the intelligent spirit it confessedly hath no power, further than to dislodge it from its mortal tenement; finish its state of trial; transmit it to the world of spirits; and restore it to God who gave it. Thither the immortal principle of our Friend is gone; to mingle with the spirits of just men made perfect; to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, either in a state of conscious enjoyment, with him who is Lord of the dead and of the living, or to repose in safety under his divine protection 'till the great scenes of the present life are concluded.

It is only over the good man's earthly part, and mortal interests, that death can triumph: it hath indeed torn him from those he loved; dissolved all perishing connexions; deadened the passions; damped the pleasures; extinguished the flame of animal life; and defaced the curious structure of the body: but with this, it hath also ended the thousand frailties, languors, diseases and pains, to which at best the flesh is liable. It hath put into execution, the ancient, universal sen-

rence, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;" it hath unclothed the spirit, that it may be clothed upon with an house which is from Heaven; it hath folded up the vesture of the body; and we have now committed it to that silent vault, there to sleep 'till the general resurrection. But how calm and sound is that sleep? how free from every disturbing sensation or disquieting dream? how little affected by the tumults and confusions which agitate this vain and changeful world? There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest, they are in peace, they rest in their beds, and the clods of the valley are sweet!

What multitudes are here asleep around us? how peopled is this awful spot? how numerous the triumphs of Sin? how solemn the trophies of Death? how eloquent is that great Preacher? how pathetic the voice which issues from these crowded tombs? Here tender infancy and trembling age, inconsiderate youth and presumptuous manhood, here rich and poor, learned and ignorant, sinners and saints, "being dead yet speak" to every age and class and character; entreating the thoughtless to consider his latter end; the sinner to repent; the saint to persevere, and each of us to redeem his time, improve his talents, be ready for death, and wise for eternity: proclaiming as with one united voice "that in an hour when we think not the Son of Man cometh." How near may that coming be, to  
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the youngest or strongest who now surround me? He may not only say "this year thou shalt die," but, "this night shall thy soul be required of thee." We hold life by the tenure these once held it, our frailties, forfeitures, and destiny the same. If we wait the graves are ready for us. In some such mansion as those we now behold, we must shortly take up our abode: for the grave is an house appointed for all the living. Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.

But, my Brethren, how much are these solemnities of Death increased by its awful consequences. It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment. Ere long the divinely commissioned angel standing upon the sea and upon the earth, shall swear by him who liveth for ever and ever, that there shall be *Time* no longer. Then shall the grandest and most interesting events take place that words can utter or imagination paint. The Lord himself, shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in CHRIST shall rise first. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. Then shall these graves heave, these tombs be rent, these vaults burst open, and earth and sea deliver up their dead. All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the *Son of Man*, and shall come forth; they that have done good

good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation. Then will the pious dead be delivered from the bondage of corruption in which they now are held, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Then must that corruptible which we have now committed to the earth put on incorruption, and that mortal must put on immortality; and thus shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, —Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory?

And now will commence that most tremendous scene, which John in vision beheld. I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it, from whose face, the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead small and great stand before God. And the Books were opened. And the dead were judged, out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their works. Then will the judge say to the virtuous and good, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. And to the wicked and impenitent, Go ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into Life eternal. Such is the winding up of the great schemes of providence concerning the present world; such the consummation devoutly to be wished by pious and good men.

And



And now, my Brethren, under these impressions, of what infinite importance does true religion appear? without which we can never pass safely through these solemn events, or be qualified for the final perfection and felicity of an intelligent and immortal Being. How vain are the pursuits, the toils, the trifles of such a life as this, compared with our being ready for death, and judgment, and eternity? How wise and happy the man who hath made this his care, who hath secured these great interests himself, as well as excited others to attend to them, compared with him, who by the most anxious application to the things of this world, should at last be able to die the possessor of millions, or exchange a throne for a grave? Admonished by these scenes, let me intreat you to embrace and pursue a Life of Religion; by which I mean—Love to God expressed by keeping his Commandments. Love to Man exemplified by doing as you would be done by. A serious concern about personal improvement. And these enlivened by Faith in CHRIST, and the discoveries of his glorious Gospel. This is the Religion which our departed Friend inculcated by his doctrines, and recommended by his example. This will, by divine mercy, conduct you honorably through Life, support and comfort you in Death, and at length introduce you, to the assembly of the wise and good, to the converse of angels, the friendship  
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of Jesus, the presence of God, and all the inconceivable Joys of Immortality. *Amen.*

*Note, Though some part of this address was omitted in the delivery on account of the Rain, it was thought proper to print it, as it was written.*



A CHRONOLOGICAL and particular  
ACCOUNT of the WRITINGS of the  
Reverend THOMAS AMORY, D. D.

S E R M O N S.

I. CHRIST the light of the world; or the principal improvements made in religion by Christianity; at the young men's lecture in Exeter, September 9, 1735, at the assembly of the united protestant dissenting ministers of Devon and Cornwall, published at the request of the young gentlemen, and of a great number of ministers present.

J O H N viii. 12.

This discourse was part of a sett of sermons on the evidences of the christian religion. The preface exhibiteth the plan of the reasoning in which that important argument was treated; and particularly represents the doctrines and precepts which the gospel hath added to natural religion, which though reason could not easily and fully discover, yet are suitable to the state of man, worthy of the perfections of GOD, and highly advantageous for us to know and practise.

This judicious and laboured discourse met with such a general reception, that the whole impressi<sup>on</sup> was soon disposed of.

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It was republished in 1758, in a volume of eighteen sermons, sold by J. Buckland, in Pater-noster-Row, 8vo.

Dr. Thomas Morgan, the author of a book intitled, "The Moral Philosopher," thought fit to make objections to some principles advanced in this sermon, as repugnant to his scheme of infidelity, which being sent in manuscript to the author, he made a proper reply to them in a brief confutation.

II. The character and blessedness of those to whom to live is CHRIST, and to die gain, at Ilminster, in the county of Somerset, May 25, 1738, on occasion of the death of the Rev. Mr. James Strong, Ætat. 53. 8vo. Republished in the volume of eighteen sermons, 1758.

PHILIPPIANS i. 21.

III. The nature of sound doctrine, and the encouragements to preach it; a charge delivered at the ordination of the Rev. Mr. William Harris, at Wells, in the county of Somerset, April 15, 1741. Published at the request of the ministers present, and the principal hearers.

TITUS ii. 1.

Published with the sermon on that occasion by the Rev. Mr. Samuel Billingsley, intitled, "The character of Saint Paul as a preacher considered and recommended."

2 CORINTHIANS iv. 5.

IV. Self-dedication to GOD explained and recommended, in two sermons, with a particular view to the new year; with a prefatory address to  
young



young persons, inculcating various considerations and motives to determine them to devote themselves to GOD. Dec. 25, 1742. 12mo.

A second edition of these discourses was published 1751.

V. The prayer of King Jehosaphat considered and applied to the state of the nation; at Taunton, December 18, 1745, on occasion of the fast on account of the war and the unnatural rebellion. Published at the request of the audience. 8vo.

2 CHRON. XX. 5—13.

A second edition of this sermon was published soon after the first.

VI. Daily devotion assisted and recommended, in four sermons; representing the principal instances of the providence and goodness of GOD, which every morning and evening offer to our thoughts, and the use we should make of them. 1747. 8vo.

PSALM iii. 5. PSALM xcii. 2.

In a second edition, 1770, Dr. Amory added some forms of prayer for a family, for morning and evening.

VII. Eight sermons on a future general judgment; representing the great events introductory to the coming of CHRIST to judgment, and the end of the world;—the certainty, solemnity, and consequences of that decisive season;—the persons who are to be judged;—and the talents and actions for which they must give an account. Dedicated to the congregation at Taunton, the au-

thor's pastoral charge, who earnestly desired the publication, 1749. 8vo.

MATTHEW XXV. 31, 32. 2 CORINTH. V. 10.

These discourses were republished in the volume of eighteen sermons.

VIII. The character and blessedness of those who die in the LORD; at Bridgwater, Jan. 6, 1748, on occasion of the death of the Reverend John Moore, M. A. Ætat. 76.

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REVELATION xiv. 13.

IX. Ministers not lords over the faith of Christians, but helpers of their joy; at Lewin's-Mead, Bristol, at the ordination of the Rev. Mr. William Richards, May 22, 1751. 8vo.

Published with the charge delivered on that occasion, by the Rev. Mr. Samuel Billingsley, intitled, "The rule of conduct for christian ministers represented."

1 TIMOTHY iv. 16.

X. Our times in the hand of GOD; at Culliton, in the county of Devon, March 8, 1752, on occasion of the death of Mrs. Mary Slater, wife of the Rev. Mr. Samuel Slater, Ætat. 30. 8vo.

PSALM xxxi. 15.

XI. Six sermons on Contentment, and two sermons on the reasonableness of religion, and the advantages of prayer, 1753.

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XII. The shortness and frailty of human life represented and accounted for, on occasion of the death of John Halliday, Esq; member of parliament for Taunton, June 9, 1754, *Ætat.* 44. 8vo.

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I CORINTHIANS i. 21.

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4, 5. In

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Rev.

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IX. Dr. Amory was also the author of some poetical pieces, sacred and moral ; and in the year 1724, published a poem on the praises of Taunton, the place of his birth.

Rotherhithe,  
July 30, 1774.

R. FLEXMAN.

T H E E N D.



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